Religion education in Scandinavian countries and Finland – Perspectives to present situation

Saila Poulter
Arniika Kuusisto
Arto Kallioniemi

Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki, Finland

Introduction

This article looks into the Religion Education (RE) in Finland, approaching the topic first of all from the international, mainly European, discussion, and then focusing more into the Nordic or Scandinavian setting, and finally the current trends and issues discussed in relation to the Finnish model. We have chosen to use the term *religion education* instead of *religious education* when discussing the present state in the Scandinavian countries to illustrate the nature of RE as officially non-denominational that is based on a Study of Religions approach (see Berglund 2013). However, in Finnish case, the term religion education is complex since the subject is officially non-denominational, yet the RE model is organized according to the membership of religious communities.

The increased mobility of people, globalization, diversification, secularization and individualism each contribute into keeping society in constant change. Besides strengthening and enriching the society in a variety of ways, the change also necessitates some re-evaluation of what have been seen as the customary policies and practices. This applies very strongly to education, where the need for the educators to be able to look "through other eyes" is particularly essential (Poulter, Riitaoja & Kuusisto 2015). Religions, world views, values—and dialogue in education as their relationship—and in particular, learning *from* religions and world views, has become one of the cores of social debate in recent years. This debate has become more and more visible in both national and international arenas. (Weisse 2009, 11.) According to Professor Robert Jackson, one of the leading experts in the field internationally, the theme has never in the history been discussed so widely and actively than at the moment. Besides the experts of Religious Education, the debate has involved politicians, citizens and public at large. (Jackson 2011; ix-xxii.) The discussion has included a quest

for the most appropriate religious education model, and an examination of RE's links to education on values, human rights and citizenship.

RE is also connected to the construction of nationality, and the societal integration of minorities. For example in Finland, although the Evangelical Lutheran majority, to which over 70% of Finns officially hold membership, is notably secularized, this secular Lutheranism still constructs a strong component in nation-making—if not directly, at least as a way of excluding those who represent some other worldview (Lappalainen 2006; Poulter, Riitaoja & Kuusisto 2015; Kuusisto & Lamminmäki-Vartia, 2015). Furthermore, questions concerning multiculturalism have been under scrutiny (Willaime 2007, 62–65). For instance, some Finnish schools have launched their own initiatives in order to profile RE in a way that would serve learning towards active citizenship in a world of diversity. This illustrates how the question of the practical arrangements regarding the instruction of a particular school subject should always be seen as a broader societal issue reflecting specific cultural-historical contexts and political-ideological agenda of a state and transnational agents (Poulter 2013b).

European organizations have in different political statements stressed the importance of religion for societies and for solving problems in societal level. For example, the European Council has emphasized intercultural dialogue and the dimension of religions and world views in intercultural education in several documents illuminating how knowledge relating to different world views and interfaith dialogue can promote social cohesion and help solving conflicts due to diversification of values in the society. (Council of Europe 2014; 2008, 24.) French Professor Jean-Paul Willaime names three timely developmental trends of our time concerning RE in Europe. Firstly, there is an increasing integration between the goals and tasks of RE and general pedagogical aims of schooling. In many European countries, RE is understood in terms of helping pupils to become responsible, cosmopolitan citizens and members of a diverse society. Secondly, there is a growing acceptance and tolerance towards diversity of religions and worldviews which can be seen for instance in the attempts of taking Islam into consideration in either organizing a specific Islamic education or paying attention to Islam as a part of school curriculum. Thirdly, the reforms concerning RE in many countries generate strong political tensions and create societal conflicts. (Willaime 2007, 87–90.)

At the European level, the ways of organizing the teaching of RE vary a lot. The way RE is organized in different countries is affected by many reasons but in general, one may claim that the

religious landscape of the country, the role and value of religion in society in general, and the structure of the particular educational system, its history, and educational politics frame strongly the space for how RE as a subject is constructed and understood. (Schreiner 2002, 94.) The spectrum of how the instruction is organized in practice, that is, the aims, contents, authorities, and audience—what is taught, to whom, and by whom—varies immensely both between countries, but also sometimes between parallel systems within a particular country, for example state schools vs. faith schools. This also means that sometimes the contrast between religious/worldview socialization of the home and the school RE/world view education is notable: pupils may receive education with very different aims than those upheld in the home, possibly causing the pupil difficult negotiations on values and memberships (Kuusisto 2011). For example, some school systems may offer confessional RE to students who do not consider themselves particularly religious (Smyth et al. 2013a, 1).

The recent debate on the objectives and content of RE as a school subject mirrors the wide range of differing views on the role of education concerning religion in the public school. The review has taken place, above all, in terms of how teaching of one's own religion and denominationalism can be respected, and how extensively other worldviews and ideologies should be included as a part of teaching. As Jackson (2004, 161–162) notes, RE as a part of the public school curriculum can not be defined only as denominational teaching of one's own religious tradition, or function primarily as a source for religious identity construction—rather, the subject should contribute to the future of civil society: to foster dialogue, tolerance and mutual understanding between people of different faiths or world views.

In the above, we have aimed to set a wider international framework—particularly regarding the timely debates in Europe—for a context in which we examine the situation in Scandinavia and Finland. In the following, we will bring some perspectives from Nordic countries into the discussion on religion and RE from the angle of religious pluralism. We start by briefly presenting the historical development and the current situation in Scandinavian countries and Finland. The perspective is on the comprehensive school level across these countries.

Religious Landscape in Finland and Scandinavia

Compared to many other European countries, Finland is formally still a homogeneous country—when statistics are concerned. In 2013 about 78% of Finns belonged to the Evangelical-Lutheran

Church. In 2011 1.1% belonged to the Orthodox Church, 1.5% belonged to the other registered religious communities, and 20.1% did not belong to any religious group (Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2012, 29). However, the numbers of new religious movements is growing: in 2014 there were over 900 different religious groups and communities in Finland (Uskonnot Suomessa 2015).

Finnish religiosity is becoming increasingly privatized and the relationship of the individuals to the church is altering (Pessi 2013), which is a significant issue both politically and socially, as Lutheranism has been very strong national and moral entity. The traditional Lutheran hegemony has paved the way to what can now be categorized as secular Lutheranism (Riitaoja, Poulter and Kuusisto 2010; 2015). Alongside that, there is also a growing interest in new religious movements and spirituality. Thus, what is interesting in discussions on societal secularization is to what extent people are becoming less religious, or whether there is growing religiosity of the people. Arguably, alongside the societal secularization in Finland, there is a process of post-secularization (e.g. Habermas 2011) which can be interpreted as a metamorphosis of religion and religious plurality in society and the increasing significance of religion in societal matters.

There are several studies (e.g. Ketola 2008; Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2012) showing that Finnish religiosity is growing and transforming while at the same time church membership is steadily falling. For instance, it is a rough estimation that there are nearly 60,000 people with a Muslim background in Finland (Martikainen 2006, 211–214; Tilastokeskus 2010). Late modern religiosity has been characterized as a matter of personal choice and empirical studies show that religiosity as such has not diminished but has instead changed in nature. As Kuusisto (2011) and Pessi (2013) show, individual agency is central in constructing alternative religious identities and determining personal choices between religious and non-religious worldviews.

The Scandinavian countries and Finland share many similar features influencing the status and profile of RE in society. First, looking at the baseline, the religious landscape is rather similar in all of these countries. The status and role of religion have traditionally been very similar: The Lutheran church has held a position of a state church. Although the majority of inhabitants in Scandinavian countries and Finland belong to Lutheran church, the number of people regularly attending religious services in the traditional religious institutions is very low. Despite the low attendance in religious services as such, however, people usually participate in life rites. This feature is present across the Nordic countries, and is thus sometimes referred to as the “Nordic paradox” (Osbeck & Skeie 2014, 239). Also educational structures in Scandinavian countries and Finland are very similar; all

children attend a comprehensive school system lasting from 8 to 10 years. (Selander 1999, 54, 74; Kallioniemi 2006; 76.)

Despite the similarities between these countries when it comes to societal and educational features, each of these holds their own solution to how religious education is being organized. Each RE system has been developed specifically for the particular societal setting, although Sweden, Norway and Denmark share the idea of a non-confessional RE. Contrary to this, in Finland, RE is being taught according to pupil's own religious or non-religious worldview. In Sweden, RE is defined as an objective, neutral and non-confessional subject, which has been developed as such since the 1960's (Larsson 2007, 194). In Denmark there was a shift towards non-confessional RE in 1975, whereas in Norway a parallel shift took place in 1997 (Selander 1999, 10; Leganger-Krogstad 2011, 93).

Swedish Religion Education

Swedish educational system was established in the 1840's, with a close connection to the Lutheran church. At the time it was obvious that in grammar school RE had a central role. The Freedom of Religion Act came into force in Sweden in 1951. Before that it was not permissible for Swedish citizens to withdraw from the Lutheran church without becoming a member of another religious community. Until 1960's, the aim of RE was to raise the Swedish children as Christians. (Selander 1992, 179: Osbeck & Skeie 2014, 238.)

After having accepted—and perhaps partly through a wider recognition to its contents—the Freedom of Religion Act, the Swedish society took a step towards a more pluralistic, multicultural society. Christianity was no longer an all-encompassing moral and civic basis for being a Swede. The Freedom of Religion Act had a significant role when the compulsory school was established in 1962, and after many debates, education in schools was characterized as 'nondenominational' in the syllabus in 1962. This meant that RE in schools was ought to be objective in the sense that it would provide 'neutral' teaching of religion and life questions to all pupils without binding itself to religious upbringing. (Pyysiäinen 1982, 3-4; Berglund 2013, 174.) Sweden was the first Scandinavian country which adopted non-confessional religious education.

The development of the nature of RE in Sweden can be seen in the change of the name of subject. In 1962, after the renewing of curriculum, the name of the subject 'Christianity' was changed into the 'knowledge of Christianity'. (Selander 1992, 180-181; Skogar 2005, 41.) According to Berglund (2013, 174), the objectivity requirement meant that teachers should not influence the pupils' beliefs and the teachers were expected to teach also about other religions. In 1969, after the curriculum was revised, the name of the subject was once again changed; this time to the 'knowledge of religion'. This name change concluded the overall transition from a confessional to non-confessional school subject. This change also emphasized the focus of the subject into teaching *about* religion, including different religions. (Berglund 2013, 175.) According to Hartman (2011, 30), in this renewing of curriculum, RE also moved from being a primarily facts-orientated subject to a student oriented one. This orientation holds a long tradition in Sweden: life questions have had a key role in Swedish RE already since the 1960s (Osbeck 2006). In the 1980 revision of the curriculum, 'knowledge of religion' was put into subject group of society-orientated subjects.

Danish Religion Education

In Denmark, the Lutheran church has traditionally been responsible for giving catechetic education. Until 1948 the Constitution claimed that it belonged to the tasks of the state to support the Lutheran church, and that religious education in schools was one way of doing this. The function of RE was to provide pupils with a positive attitude towards Lutheran doctrines. In the 1950's and 1960's school reforms in Denmark, the nature of RE was under significant debate. In 1975, RE become a non-confessional subject; the school law directed that the basic content of the subject should be Evangelical-Lutheran Christianity but that it should not have elements of religious socialization. (Bugge 1992, 107-108; 1992, 56-57.)

In comprehensive school, the name of the Danish RE is *Kristendomskunskab* (Study of Christianity). It is taught in all grade levels except the year when pupils attend confirmation school in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. There are no official state regulations on the number of annual lessons that this subject is to be instructed, but in the ministerial supervising guidelines the subject consists of 30 hours per year, except in the 1st and 6st grades, where 60 hours are suggested. Although the aims and contents of this subject have changed many times, Christianity has kept the most prominent place in curriculum. Other religions and world views are covered in these classes as a part of the obligatory contents, too, but only in the more senior classes, from 7th grade onwards. (Buchardt 2014, 49-52.)

Norwegian Religion Education

In Norway, RE was first introduced in 1889. The content of RE as a school subject was solely based on the Catechism and the Bible. In 1939 the status of the Catechism was reduced. Still, in the 1969 Act of Education it was stated that the function of school is to give the pupils a Christian and moral education in co-operation with their parents. The subject was seen to be based on the Lutheran faith, because the majority of people belonged to the Lutheran state church. Since RE was confessional in nature, and the teacher was to be a member of the Lutheran church, it can be seen that the teaching was still firmly connected to the church education. (Haakedal 2002, 91.) Norwegian society changed significantly between the 1960's and 1990's, and a new subject 'Christianity and Orientation to Life Questions' was established in 1997 (Afdal et al. 1997, 105-107; Haakedal 2001, 93-94). In Norway, that marked the beginning of a new RE subject, which was to be taught mutually to all pupils. The contents included religions, ethics, philosophy and life questions. The name of this subject was first 'Christianity, religion and world view studies', but in 2008 it was altered into 'Religion, Worldview and Ethics.' Since 1997 the subject contents have been renewed three times. (Leganger-Krogstad 2011, 93.)

In Norway, Religion, Worldview and Ethics education is a compulsory subject. In primary school level (grades 1-7), the average number of lessons per year is 61, while in secondary it is 51. According to the current curriculum (2008), the subject covers quite a wide and complex thematic content consisting of Christianity, other religions (Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religious diversity), philosophy of life, as well as philosophy and ethics. (Skeie & Bråten 2014, 220-221.)

Finnish Religious Education

Finnish RE has functioned as means of forwarding very different goals in the course of history (Poulter, *forthcoming*). Although there has never been a real reform in the actual form of RE, the basis of RE has distanced itself from a theological viewpoint over the last decades and it is today firmly rooted in educational science. Today, the educational interpretation of the subject is very holistic: the goal of RE is to support the pupils' personal growth and construction of their individual worldviews (Kallioniemi & Ubani 2008, 322). Historical roots of the current solutions for the Finnish RE are in the 1920's. It was then decided that in grammar schools, RE should be taught

according to the religion to which the majority of the pupils belonged. Since the basic structure for the organization of RE was established, the subject as such has remained relatively unaltered. (Kallioniemi & Ubani 2012, 179.)

The Finnish RE model can be categorized as a religion-based model (Schreiner, 2001). This is because it offers students teaching in 'one's own religion', according to their religious affiliation—or the lack of one. The current system of religious and worldview education includes individual curricula for Lutheran and Orthodox religions as well as 11 minority religions, and secular ethics for students coming from a non-religious background. Although RE is organized according to the denomination of the pupil, teaching is non-confessional in the sense that it does not permit practicing religion as a part of the school instruction (Freedom of Religion Act 2003; Basic Education Act, Amendment 2003/454, 13§; Kallioniemi & Ubani 2012, 178-179). Today, Finnish RE is officially a plural and non-denominational, however a segregated model of RE. Nationally, 92 per cent of school-age children participate in Lutheran RE. Outside the capital Helsinki area, minority religions are rarely taught. Traditionally, Finnish RE has been understood as a place for strengthening knowledge of students' own religious roots and religious identities. However, the aim of RE is also to help students understand the ethical, cultural and human meaning of religion and provide them with knowledge of the Finnish spiritual tradition and other religions (NCCBE 2004, 202; 2014).

The benefits of the Finnish RE model have been seen in assuring the rights of religious minorities to receive and provide RE according to their own religion (Matilainen & Kallioniemi, 2011; Kuusisto & Kallioniemi, 2014; Rissanen, 2014). However, the future of the Finnish RE is facing several challenges. For instance, one can ask why RE is determined by the parents' choice of a religious (non-)affiliation, although it is known as the *child's own* religion. Or why are Lutheran students obliged to participate in Lutheran RE, while all other pupils are free to choose between all the possible RE or secular ethic classes that are taught at the local school? (Poulter, Kuusisto, Matilainen, Kallioniemi, *manuscript.*) It is also important to reflect, for instance, on whether in the classes based on children's 'own religion' internally diverse worldviews of pupils belonging officially to the same religion are recognized (Poulter, Riitaoja & Kuusisto, 2015).

Although the new National Curriculum (established in 2014, and is to be implemented in 2016) aims to teach about other religions at an earlier stage than so far, it leaves the structural question of how to enable a dialogue between religions and non-religious worldviews open, due to the segregated model of RE. As identity is understood today as a fluid, multi-layered entity, the concept

of “my own religion” (singular) already as such is somewhat problematic. Educationally “my own religion” vs. “other religions and worldviews” is based on dichotomous thinking, which has widely been criticized by scholars of intercultural education (Andreotti 2011; Alberts 2007).

According to recent studies, Finnish minority RE (such as Islamic, Buddhist, or Orthodox RE) may have many functions both for the individual and for the society as a whole. According to Rissanen (2014) it can help pupils with minority religious identities integrate into Finnish society, so that, for instance, Muslims would view themselves as Finnish Muslims. In contrast, Zilliacus (2014) warns of the lack of dialogue within schools and between classes because of the segregated nature of RE is a great challenge to the inclusion of minority students in the entire school culture.

Conclusion

As can be seen from the above, the Scandinavian countries and Finland hold comparable societal trends and are, in terms of religious landscape, relatively similar. All these societies hold a similar historical bond to the Lutheran church, and although these societies are increasingly secular and pluralistic, many traces of Secular Lutheran or Post-Lutheran thinking can still be detected in the present situation (see e.g. Riitaoja et al. 2010; Poulter et al. 2015). However, the approach to RE has been context-specific, varying from country to country, and in comparison between these, especially the Finnish model sticks out among them.

In Finland, religion is considered a private issue. However, those cultural elements with Lutheran dimension that are connected to the national basis are widely acknowledged as a part of being a Finnish citizen. (Kääriäinen, Niemelä & Ketola 2005, 114, 168.) According to *Gallup Ecclesiastica* 2011 (see Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2012, 48), Finns think positively about the presence of Christian cultural dimension in the schools. The survey shows that a great majority of Finns accept Christian influence in Christmas celebrations and in the end-of-school spring festivities even though a particular hymn, “Suvivirsi” (*Summer hymn*) generates a media debate every spring whether such a song with religious elements can be sung. Carrying different religious symbols and religious clothing are fairly neutral issues for Finnish people but two out of five Finns consider Muslim women wearing hijab as a negative thing and the numbers are much higher if a woman covers herself in niqab or burkha (Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2012, 50–51). However, compared to many other European countries there has not been much debate concerning the use of religious symbols in

the public sphere in Finland (See Poulter 2013a). Moreover, more than three out of five consider RE at school in positive terms (Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2012, 48).

Presently, there are on-going studies on the ways in which the dialogue in RE could be increased, including trials on a partly integrative model of RE and secular ethics, with the particular aim of bringing students with diverse background together to create dialogue between worldviews. Some research projects have also been initiated to study how this could be done in Finnish context. (Åhs, Poulter & Kallioniemi, *submitted.*) One important issue that needs to be solved in the process is, how the 'dialogue' is to be put into practice. This concerns especially the transitional period between the current model and the potential integrated model, or in particular an 'in-between' model where different RE groups are brought into one space for a 'dialogue'. The different power positions both within the groups and between them—besides the evident power difference between the teacher and the pupils—need to be carefully acknowledged and taken into account (Poulter, Riitaoja & Kuusisto 2015; Poulter & Riitaoja, *manuscript*), so that none of the students is, for instance, forced into a position where they have to act as representatives of a particular faith group.

In all Scandinavian countries there are considerable challenges ahead when thinking of the future of RE in comprehensive education. Discussions and struggles related to diversity, including religious diversity, have had a huge impact for example on Danish society contemporarily a well as historically (Buckhardt 2014). Furthermore, radicalization has caused concern also across Scandinavia and Finland, enhancing the needs for increasing cohesion and avoidance of dropping out, and beyond, among younger generations.

At least the following five issues should thus be taken into consideration: First, what would be the relevant aims and contents for RE when thinking of the subject as a part of the societal education as a whole? Secondly, RE is a school subject that is in many ways linked to nationality and citizenship: historically RE has given tools for citizenship building and mutual ethical reflection. The question today is, however, how RE can be reframed as a subject helping pupils to find their place in the shifting, local and global contexts, and to prepare them in becoming cosmopolitan citizens. Thirdly, how is RE to answer to the increasing secularization as well as diversity of religions and worldviews in today's society? It has to be discussed, to what extent RE should be built on a shared understanding of religious / faith tradition, or whether the subject should have a descriptive aim of presenting different values and worldviews without taking a strong religious positioning? Fourthly, as the societal fragmentation increases and the political role of religion has

grown its importance in our societies, one cannot avoid asking, what can its contribution be in helping individuals to integrate to the mutual civic values and shared humanity; how should it be framed as a broader societal and worldview education and education for interfaith dialogue? Finally, how can RE develop student-orientated pedagogy which pays attention to changes in learning environments as pedagogy has changed remarkably in recent decades and traditional classroom as a primary space for learning is no longer effective platform for learning? These and other related issues raise the need for conducting more research on these matters, both in Scandinavia and Finland and more generally.

References

Afdal, Geir, Haakedal, Elisabet & Leganger-Krogstad, Heid. (1997). *Tro, livstolking och tradisjon*. Oslo: Tano Aschehoug.

Alberts, Wanda. (2007). *Integrative Religious Education in Europe. A Study-of-Religions Approach*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Andreotti, Vanessa. (2011). (Towards) decoloniality and diversality in global citizenship education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education 9* (3–4), 381–397.

Andreotti, Vanessa, Ahenakew, Cash & Cooper, Garrick. (2012). Equivocal knowing and Elusive Realities: Imagining Global Citizenship Otherwise. In Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti & Mario T. M. de Souza (Eds.) *Postcolonial Perspectives on Global Citizenship Education*. New York: Routledge, 221–238.

Andreassen, Bengt-Ove. (2013). Religion Education in Norway: Tension or Harmony between Human Rights and Christian Cultural Heritage? *Temenos*, Vol. 49 No. 2, 137-164.

Berglund, Jenny. (2013). Swedish Religion Education: Objective but Marinated in Lutheran Protestantism. *Temenos.* Vol 49:2, 165-184.

Buchardt, Mette. (2014). Religious Education at Schools in Denmark. In Rothgangel, M., Skeie, G. Jäggle, M. (eds.) *Religious Education at School in Europe. Part 3: Northern Europe*. Vienna Forum for Theology and Study of Religions, Band 10, 3. Göttingen: Vienna University Press/V&R unipress, 45-74.

Bugge, Knud Eyvin. (1992). Religious Education in Denmark on the threshold to the 1990's. *Panorama, International Journal of Comparative Religious Education and Values*. 4:1, 53-84.

Council of Europe. (2008). *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity*. (Launched by the Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs at their 118 Ministerial Session, Strasbourg, 7 May 2008.) Strasbourg: Council of Europe. (Accessed 15th January 2015) http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf

Council of Europe (2014). *Signposts - Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious worldviews in intercultural education*. (Accessed 5th December 2014). <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/human-rights-education-intercultural-education/6101-signposts-policy-and-practice-for-teaching-about-religions-and-non-religious-world-views-in-intercultural-education.html>

Haakedal, Elisabet. (2001). From Lutheran Catechism to World Religions and Humanism: Dilemmas and Middle Ways through the Story of Norwegian Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 23:2, 88-97.

Habermas, Jürgen. (2011). "The Political". The Rational Meaning of a Questionable Inheritance of Political Theory. In Eduardo Mendieta & Jan Vanantwerpen (eds.) *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere.* New York: Columbia University Press, 15–33.

Hartman, Sven. (2011). Perspektiv på skolans religionsundervisning. In Malin Löfstedt (Ed.), Religionsdidaktik: Mångfald, livsfrågor och etik i skolan. Studentlitteratur. Lund: Lund Universitet, 19–34.

Jackson, Robert. (2004). Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality: Issues in Diversity and Pedagogy, London, RoutledgeFalmer.

Jackson, Robert. (2011) 'Foreword' in Hunter-Henin, M (Ed.) *Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*, (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate), xix-xxiii.

Jensen, Tim & Kjeldsen, Karna. (2013). RE in Denmark- Political and Professional Discourses and Debates. Past and Present. *Temenos*, Vol 49. No 2, 185-224.

Kallioniemi, Arto. (2006). Religious Education Curricula in Comprehensive School in Scandinavia and Finland in the 1990's. In Tirri, K. (ed). *Nordic Perspectives on Religion, Spirituality and Identity. Yearbook 2006 of Department of Practical Theology*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, (75-86).

Kallioniemi, Arto & Ubani, Martin. (2008). Eksistenssianalyyttinen didaktinen teoria uskonnonopetuksen uudistajana. In A. Kallioniemi, A. Toom, M. Ubani, H. Linnansaari & K. Kumpulainen (eds.). *Ihmistä kasvattamassa: Koulutus – arvot – uudet avaukset. Cultivating Humanity: Education – Values – New Discourses.* Suomen kasvatustieteellinen seura. Kasvatusalan tutkimuksia 40. Turku: Finnish Education Research Association, 311-330.

Kallioniemi, Arto & Ubani, Martin. (2012). Religious Education in Finnish School System. In H. Niemi, A. Toom & A. Kallioniemi (eds.) *Miracle of Education. The Principles and Practices of Teaching and Learning in Finnish Schools.* Rotterdam, Sense Publisher , 177-188.

Kirkon tutkimuskeskus. (2012). *Haastettu kirkko. Suomen evankelis-luterilainen kirkko vuosina 2008–2011*. Kirkon tutkimuskeskuksen julkaisuja 115. Tampere: Kirkon tutkimuskeskus.

Kuusisto, Arniika & Lamminmäki-Vartia, Silja. (2015). Päiväkodin johtaja katsomussensitiivistä varhaiskasvatusyhteisöä rakentamassa. In Martin Ubani, Saila, Poulter & Arto, Kallioniemi (eds.) Uskonto lapsuuden kulttuureissa. Ubani, M., Poulter, S. & Kallioniemi, A. (toim.). Helsinki: Lasten keskus, 127-176.

Kääriäinen, Kimmo, Niemelä, Kati & Ketola, Kimmo. (2005). *Religion in Finland. Decline, Change and Transformation of Finnish Religiosity*. Publication 54. Tampere: Church Research Institute.

Lappalainen, Sirpa. (2006). Liberal Multiculturalism and National Pedagogy in Finnish Preschool Context: Inclusion or Nation Making? *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 14 (1): 99–112. doi:10.1080/14681360500487777.

Legander-Krogstad, Heid. (2011). *The Religious Dimension of Intercultural Education Contributions to a Contextual Understanding*. Diss. International Practical Theology. Vol 14. Wien: Lit Verlag.

Osbeck, Christina. (2006). *Kränkningens livsförståelse – en religionsdidaktisk studie av livsförståelselärande i skolan.* Karlstad University Studies 2006: 10. Karlstad: Universitetstryckeriet.

Osbeck, Christina & Skeie, Geir. (2014). Religious Education at schools in Sweden. In Routgandel, M., Skeie, G. Jäggle, M. (eds.) *Religious Education at School in Europe. Part 3: Northern Europe.* Vienna Forum for Theology and Study of Religions, Band 10, 3. Göttingen: Vienna University Press/V&R unipress, 237-266.

Pessi, Anne-Birgitta. (2013). Privatized Religiosity Revisited. *Social Compass* 60 (1), 3–21.

Poulter, Saila. (2013a). 'Uskonto julkisessa tilassa: koulu yhteiskunnallisuuden näyttämönä'. [*Religion in the Public Sphere: School as a Societal Arena*] *Kasvatus*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 162–17.

Poulter, Saila. (2013b). Kansalaisena maallistuneessa maailmassa. Koulun uskonnonopetuksen yhteiskunnallinen tehtävä. [*Citizenship in a Secular Age. Finnish Religious Education as a Place for Civic Education*] Academic Dissertation. Suomen ainedidaktisen tutkimusseuran julkaisuja, 5. Helsinki: Suomen ainedidaktinen tutkimusseura.

Poulter, Saila., Riitaoja, Anna-Leena. & Kuusisto, Arniika. (2015). Thinking multicultural education 'otherwise' – from a secularist construction towards a plurality of epistemologies and worldviews. *Globalization, Societies, Education.* http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2014.989964

Poulter, Saila. (forthcoming). From citizenship of God's Kingdom to liberal individualism? A critical historical analysis of Finnish religious education. *British Journal of Religious Education.*

Poulter, Saila, Kuusisto, Arniika, Matilainen, Mia & Kallioniemi, Arto. (2015). Examining Religious Education in Finland from a Human Rights Perspective. In Anders Sjöborg & Hans-Georg Ziebertz (Eds) *Religion, Education and Human Rights.* Uppsala Universitet.

Poulter, Saila. & Riitaoja, Anna-Leena. (2015). Intersections between the secular-Lutheran Knowing Subject and the exotic Other. (manuscript)

Riitaoja, Anna-Leena, Poulter, Saila & Kuusisto, Arniika. (2010). Worldviews and Multicultural Education in the Finnish Context – A Critical Philosophical Approach to Theory and Practices. *Finnish Journal of Ethnicity and Migration*. Vol. 5: 3, 87–95.

Rissanen, Inkeri. (2014). *Negotiating Identity and Tradition in Single-faith Religious Education. A Case Study of Islamic Education in Finnish Schools.* Research on Religious and Spiritual Education, Vol. 7. Munster: Waxmann.

Selander, Sven-Åke, (1999). 'Church and School in the Scandinavian Countries - in a European perspective'. In Nils-Åke, Tidman (ed.). *Into the Third Millennium.* EFTRE conference August 1998 in Copenhagen. Årsbok 1999. Malmö: Team Offset & Media, 54–75.

Schreiner, Peter. (2002). Overview of Religious Education in Europe. In Peter Schreiner & Hans Spinder, Jeremy Taylor & Wim,Westerman. *Committed to Europe's Future. Contributions from Education and Religious Education*. Comenius-Institut, Protestant Centre for Studies n Education. Münster-Lit, 91–95.

Skeie, Geir & Bråten, Oddron Marie Hovde. (2014). Religious Education at Schools in Norway. In Rothgangel, Martin, Skeie, Geir & Jäggle, Martin. (eds.) *Religious Education at School in Europe. Part 3: Northern Europe.* Vienna Forum for Theology and Study of Religions, Band 10, 3. Göttingen: Vienna University Press/V&R unipress, 210-236.

Skogar, Björn. (2005). *Bildning och religion – en lärarutbildares perspektiv*. Stockholm: Högskoleverket.

Smyth, Emer, Darmody, Merike & Lyons, Maureen. (2013). Introduction. In Emer Smyth, Maureen Lyons & Merike Darmody (Eds.) *Religious Education in a Multicultural Europe. Children, Parents and Schools*. 1–14. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Uskonnot Suomesssa [Religions in Finland]. (Accessed 20th March 2015). www.uskonnot.fi

Zilliacus, Harriet. (2014). *Supporting Students' Identites and Inclusion in Minority Religious and Secular Ethics Education. A Study on Plurality in the Finnish Comprehensive School*. University of Helsinki Institute of Behavioral Sciences. Studies in Educational Sciences 258. Helsinki: Unigrafia.

Weisse, Wolfgang. (2009). Foreword. In Julian Ipgrave, Robert Jackson & Kevin O'Grady (Eds.) *Religious Education Research through a Community of Practice: Action Research and the Interpretive Approach.* Religious Diversity and Education in Europe, 11–13. Münster: Waxmann.

Willaime, Jean-Paul. (2007). Different Models for Religion and Education in Europe. In Robert Jackson, Siebren Miedema, Wolfgang Weisse (Eds.) *Religion and Education in Europe. Developments, Contexts and Debates.* Religious Diversity and Education in Europe 3. Munster: Waxmann, 81–92.

Williaime, Jean-Paul. (2007). Different Models of Religion and Education in Europe. In *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates.* In Robert Jackson, Siebren Miedema, Wolfgang Weisse, and Jean-Paul Williaime (Eds.). München: Merlin Waxmann, 57-66.

Åhs, Vesa, Poulter, Saila & Kallioniemi, Arto. (2015). Integrated Finnish religious and worldview education: Student's perspective. (submitted)